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Opening Statement  
to the  
Executive and Legislative Nominations Committee  
by  
Christine Larson  
Student Member of the Connecticut State Board of Education

Good Afternoon Senator Looney, Representative Janowski and members of the Executive Nominations Committee. My name is Christine Larson and I am a senior at Trumbull High School in Trumbull Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and attention- it is an honor to be here this morning as one of Governor Rell's nominees to the State Board of Education.

I was born here in Connecticut and spent the first 12 years of my life living in and attending school in Bridgeport until I moved just north to Trumbull. Throughout my educational career I have attended an inner city public school, two different magnet schools and a large suburban high school. Next year I will be attending Duke University in North Carolina to study history and political science.

My interest in the educational system began through my involvement in a national career and technical student organization- Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), a student run leadership organization focused on applying education toward real life success. Serving as the National First Vice President of FCCLA my sophomore year in high school, I was not only exposed to various forms of education throughout the United States, but I was also introduced to the world of educational policy.

Now as a senior in high school, I continue this interest in education through my work on the state board. I have especially enjoyed taking part in the discussion of secondary

school reform and the effort to ensure that all Connecticut students are prepared to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Another highlight so far has been working with the other youth members on the State Student Advisory Committee on Education. The vision and achievements of this student group to improve education in our state is inspirational. Empowering youth and giving them the tools to succeed has always been an important goal in serving as a student representative, and this group truly proves that given the opportunity youth have the power to accomplish great things.

Working with the Connecticut State Board of Education has opened my eyes to the various complicated issues and underlying difficulties of ensuring quality education to all. But while the experience has been educational, it has also been inspirational, as I have seen both the potential of youth and the dedication of adults to moving our education system forward. It has been a once in a lifetime opportunity and I look forward to continuing with the board on its quest to improve the future of our youth and ultimately the future of the state of Connecticut.

Thank you for your time and attention. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.